

## Enforcing the law and providing support for employees and employers

The Seattle Office for Civil Rights enforces the Seattle Job Assistance Ordinance. When someone feels the law has been violated, they can file a charge with our office. Our services are free and impartial, and language and disability accommodations are available upon request. A charge must be filed within **180 days** of the date of the alleged incident.

The Seattle Office for Civil Rights provides employers with free information, training and technical assistance.

For more information call 206-684-4500 or visit [www.seattle.gov/civilrights/](http://www.seattle.gov/civilrights/)



Fairness.

Opportunity.

A Second Chance.

For more information contact:

Seattle Office for Civil Rights  
810 Third Avenue, Suite 750  
Seattle, WA 98102  
206-684-4500 [www.seattle.gov/civilrights](http://www.seattle.gov/civilrights)

### Other Resources

**ACLU of Washington Second Chances Program**- legal services to reduce barriers posed by criminal records  
206-624-2180  
<http://aclu-wa.org/secondchances>

**Columbia Legal Services - Institutions Project** – for people who are incarcerated in need of civil legal assistance  
(800) 542-0794

**King County Bar Association  
Neighborhood Legal Clinics**  
206- 267-7070

**King County Bar Association  
Lawyer Referral Services**  
206-267-7010

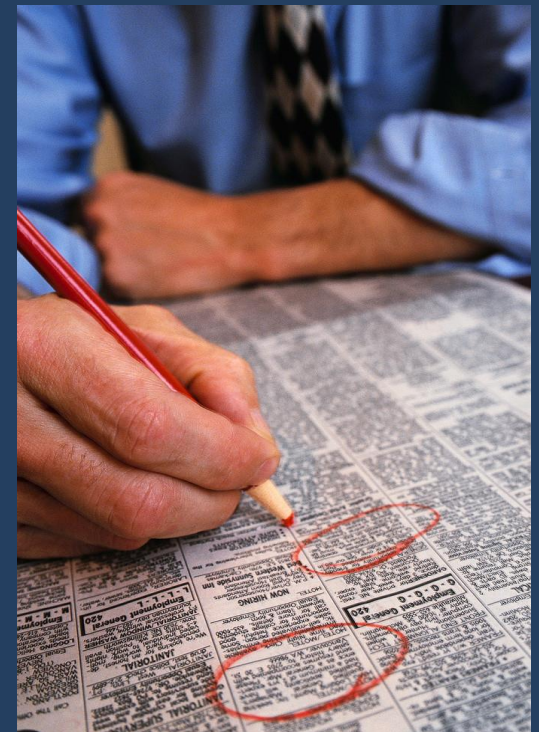
**Northwest Justice Project**  
CLEAR- Hot Line – civil legal help  
1-888-201-1014

**Legal Voice**  
Information on legal rights  
206-682-9552  
<http://legalvoice.org/tools/>



## Seattle Job Assistance Ordinance

Appropriate use of arrest and conviction records in employment



A fair chance to work

Starting November 1, 2013, new rules must be followed when using arrest and conviction records for employment decisions for jobs that are located in Seattle.

## Seattle Job Assistance Ordinance (SMC 14.17)

### Ordinance goals

Reduce recidivism • Address racial inequities caused by racial disproportionality in criminal justice system • Provide people who have served their time with an opportunity at employment

### Jobs covered by this ordinance:

- Jobs located within Seattle City limits at least 50% of the time.

### Job Advertisements

- Job advertisements may not exclude people with criminal records. For example, ads that say “no felons” are prohibited.

### Job Applications and Background Checks

- Criminal history questions may not be part of a job application nor asked in person and background checks cannot be conducted, until *after* an initial screening of applications to eliminate unqualified applicants.



### Hiring/Firing

- A legitimate business reason must exist to deny a job if the denial is based solely on a conviction record. This means the employer believes in good faith that the criminal conduct underlying the conviction either will have a negative impact on the person’s ability to perform the job, or will harm or cause injury to people, property, or business assets. As part of the determination an employer must consider the following factors:
  - ✓ seriousness of the conviction
  - ✓ number and types of convictions
  - ✓ time elapsed since the conviction
  - ✓ verifiable information related to the individual’s rehabilitation or good conduct, provided by the individual
  - ✓ specific duties and responsibilities of the job
  - ✓ where and how the job will be performed.
- If an employer denies a job because of a conviction on a background check, the employer must give the applicant an opportunity to explain or correct the information.
- The job must be held open for two business days while the applicant corrects or explains the information.

### Arrests

- A person cannot be denied a job solely on the basis of an arrest record.

### Jobs that are excluded from restrictions on using arrest/conviction records in hiring:

- Jobs that include law enforcement, policing, crime prevention, security, criminal justice, or private investigation services.
- Jobs with unsupervised access to children under sixteen years of age, developmentally disabled people, or vulnerable adults.

The law does not apply to:

- U.S. government.
- State of Washington and local Government, except the City of Seattle.

